

EDITORIAL

Short-term rental tax must help offset need for housing

The City of Portland is in the process of regulating short-term rentals. We know that by allowing short-term rentals to thrive in Portland, many Portlanders could have access to an additional income. It will also have a negative impact on the affordable housing market, a market that's already short 20,000 units.

Properly taxed, in the same manner as hotels, these short-term rentals provide a new revenue stream for a city in need. Housing advocates have asked the city to dedicate 100 percent of the revenue generated from the lodging tax toward a housing investment fund to maintain and create affordable housing.

Why should poor and low-income people support building a more beautiful Portland when they can barely afford to live here, and more so will most likely be gentrified out of the very neighborhoods being improved?

Unfortunately, getting a commitment from City Hall, specifically Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioners Amanda Fritz and Steve Novick, has been anything but encouraging. All three have communicated they don't want to dedicate General Fund money from the tax specifically toward affordable housing, citing technical reasons.

Residents, still feeling the sting from a hard recession are being asked to swallow a regressive tax for transportation and a parks bond for beautification and maintenance. Meanwhile, the job market continues to sputter and the housing market for renters and low-income families is being turned upside down.

Talk about leaving a bad taste in our mouths. The city is poised to give developers a break in Old Town, a \$7 million break by offering subsidies to developers with the hopes of building rental units for middle class Portlanders. The downside is the developers only have to keep those apartments affordable for 10 years. After that, well, we know what's next: \$1,500 rents on individual units.

We're not sure what kind of memo we need to send to the city to let them know that we do believe our city deserves real infrastructure for things like transportation and nice parks, but displacement and gentrification for common Portlanders is real. It's very real, and it's happening at an alarming rate.

Why should poor and low-income people support building a more beautiful Portland when they can barely afford to live here, and more so will most likely be gentrified out of the very neighborhoods being improved?

That's what happens when you don't require affordable housing with new transportation projects, with more development, with a greener and healthier city.

Street Roots believes that it is common sense to allocate the money generated from short-term rentals for affordable housing. City Hall should be sending a message to voters right now that the city's agenda isn't just about the future of Portland, but it's about what's happening right now. It's about the livability of our city. It's about actually practicing what we preach on equity. It's about prioritizing people over short-term profits.

Get fired up for Street Roots annual Online Auction!

The Street Roots sixth annual Online Auction is live and running for 10 days, now until noon,

Sunday, July 27. Join in at www.streetrootsauction.org

We've partnered with more than 100 local businesses to bring you more food and beer than ever before. There's also rafting, the Timbers, lots of summer events, the chance for a child to be a veterinarian for a day and a

home concert with Portland greats Casey Neill and Jenny Conlee, to name a few.

Supporting us through the online auction is a great way to give to Street Roots, while getting something great in return. We've worked hard to provide items that readers will enjoy, in a way that's easy and fun to be a part of.

Your support this year will mean giving more than 300 individuals

experiencing homelessness and poverty an immediate income to improve their quality of life. It will mean supporting the organization to go to a weekly publication schedule this December. Your support will mean helping make Street Roots strong.

We're proud to work with more than 11,000 readers and dozens of businesses in the community every day. Street Roots vendors help stabilize Portland's street corners and neighborhoods, while offering a safe place for people from all walks of life to engage with people experiencing poverty in a positive atmosphere.

When you support Street Roots, you're giving individuals and families a hand up. Being able to obtain an alternative income while helping foster community and giving people self-confidence and self-worth is invaluable. It's your support that makes that dream a reality. We can't thank you enough.



Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org or follow him on Twitter @israelbayer.

DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

Online AUCTION 2014

ALL PROCEEDS **street roots** WILL BENEFIT

JOIN IN!

FRIDAY, 7/18 THROUGH SUNDAY, 7/27

VISIT STREETROOTSAUCTION.ORG TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE TABLE!

3rd and Ash Old Town

by Fay Kaylius

A jumper climbs a tree
High on adrenaline and speed
The area blocked off
Police broadcast a plea
From The Jumper's family
"We love you
And want you to come down
And get some help"
Passersby sick with indifference
Yell: "Jump Jump Jump"

Our mission

Street Roots creates income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by producing a newspaper and other media that are catalysts for individual and social change.

Street Roots publishes every two weeks, launching on Fridays, and is available exclusively through our street vendors or by subscription. We are proud members of the International Network of Street Papers.

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Street Roots Rose City Resource

Street Roots publishes the Rose City Resource, a comprehensive booklet of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. To inquire about getting guides, call 503-228-5657. Resources are online at www.rosecityresource.org.

Vendors

Street Roots vendors buy the newspapers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1, keeping the 75 cents in profit for themselves. In order to keep the cost low to our vendors, we receive additional support from donations and in-kind contributions.



75¢
goes directly to the vendor who sold you the paper

25¢
goes toward printing costs

Vendor orientations are at 1 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Street Roots office.